PART TWO: THE ALTERNATIVES AND THEIR COMMON ELEMENTS

This chapter describes proposed policies and actions for the Schoodic District that are analyzed in subsequent parts. Presented first are proposed policies that would apply regardless of the management alternative selected. Management zoning is a technique used in general management plans to delineate how various portions of a park will be managed to meet desired future resource conditions. In this plan, which amends Acadia's 1992 *General Management Plan*, management zoning recommendations do not differ among the alternatives.

Management prescriptions that are the same for all alternatives are presented next, under the heading "Management Prescriptions Common to All Alternatives," followed by sections explaining what is unique to each of three alternatives—Alternative A: No Action, Alternative B: National Park Service Management, and Alternative C: Collaborative Management.

MANAGEMENT ZONING

Management zoning provides guidance to park managers on how each part of the park should be managed. It is one of the most important parts of this plan as it governs how and where the identified management goals will be achieved. It is used in combination with other policies governing proposed changes to parklands.

Under Acadia's *General Management Plan*, the Schoodic District is managed primarily as a Natural Zone to conserve and protect natural resources and ecological processes while providing for their use and enjoyment by the public. Since that plan was adopted, we have learned more about the natural and cultural resources of Schoodic through research and are proposing changes to the zoning scheme to reflect that knowledge. The five basic management zoning categories from Acadia's *General Management Plan* remain unchanged, but those zones are applied differently in this plan. Management zoning is the same for all alternatives (See Schoodic Management Zoning: Common to All Alternatives, Figure 8).

Placement in a management zone, e.g. natural zone, is intended to emphasize the importance of natural resource values in that zone. When a cultural resource such as an historic building is located in a natural zone, both cultural and natural resource management policies are followed.

The Protected Natural Area Subzone of the Natural Zone would be expanded under all alternatives to protect resources of unusual fragility or ecological significance. This subzone would include wetlands, shorebird habitat, significant intertidal zones, coastal islands (i.e., Schoodic, Little Moose, Pond, and Rolling), and Maine Natural Area Program "Rare or Exemplary Natural Communities" (i.e., Jack Pine Woodland on the east side of Schoodic Head and Maritime Shrubland on the southern portion of Little Moose Island). This zone perpetuates geological or ecological values with minimal or no human intrusion and would allow scientists to conduct further research.

In documentation prepared to nominate potentially eligible resources of the Schoodic District to the National Register as a historic district, the circulation system of roads and trails is highlighted. The system is considered eligible for listing in the National Register, and zoning has been amended to reflect this. Designed and built in the early years of the park, the road and trail system (outside of the former navy base) would be rezoned as cultural resources to ensure that their character-defining features are protected during normal maintenance. The roads and hiking trails would be placed in the Preservation Subzone of the Cultural Zone which would include the parking areas at Schoodic Point and Blueberry Hill, and the gravel pull-offs along the Schoodic Loop Road, all important features of the road system.

The Rockefeller Building and powerhouse, along with the surrounding landscape, would be placed in the Adaptive Use Subzone of the Cultural Zone. While the buildings retain their historical integrity, the surrounding landscape has been substantially altered. The Adaptive Use Subzone reflects this reality and directs managers to "perpetuate the characteristics that

qualify these resources for listing in the National Register of Historic Places" while allowing necessary modifications for public or administrative use. This will allow the Rockefeller complex to be reused as a focal point of the educational and research campus. Its zoning differentiates it from the rest of the surrounding Developed Zone.

The Developed Zone is the location for facilities and services to support the park. Most of the former navy property falls into this zone, as does the Frazer Point picnic area and dock.

MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES

"Management prescriptions," in National Park Service (NPS) terminology, are statements of desired future conditions that describe how the park's goals will be achieved. These statements describe the resource conditions and visitor experiences that are to be achieved and maintained over time, and the kinds and levels of management activities, visitor use, and development that are appropriate for the park. Some of the prescriptions help to achieve multiple goals. They are grouped in broad categories for ease of reference.

Following each management prescription (in boldface), are a series of actions that might be taken over the next 15 years to meet the goals stated in the plan. These actions explain how progress would be made, and are intended to be representative of the methods that would be used by NPS and its partners.

Regardless of which alternative is ultimately chosen and implemented, many prescriptions for management will be applicable to the Schoodic District as a whole, and, since this plan amends Acadia's *General Management Plan*, its prescriptions also remain in effect except where amended. Those with particular applicability to Schoodic will be restated in the amendment.

In general, NPS will continue to provide basic resource management, maintenance, administrative and visitor services at Schoodic, expanding operations as funding permits. The Schoodic Loop Road will be open year-round.

Under all alternatives, visitors would continue to enjoy an uncrowded park experience providing opportunities for solitude in a relatively natural environment. Ongoing research would continue to inform management and opportunities would continue to expand as the Schoodic Education and Research Center evolves. There would be increased interpretive and educational opportunities. The park's interpretive themes (Appendix A) would be used to guide this expansion, which could include the history of the park and of the U.S. Navy's presence at Schoodic.

Visitor information materials will be updated to reflect changes. Current informal or "social" trails, especially on Little Moose Island, will be evaluated for resource damage and revegetation plans developed where needed.

The Schoodic District was evaluated as part of parkwide alternative transportation planning, and work would continue to explore enhanced service as part of the Island Explorer inter-modal system that will include parking, shuttle buses, and ferry connections. Expansion of this system at Schoodic is dependent upon future use levels.

The system of roads, paths, parking lots, and open space on the former navy base was examined and draft design recommendations made to reduce pedestrian-vehicular conflicts and to create a setting more appropriate for an educational and research campus within a national park (see Appendix E for proposed design guidelines and see Figure 13 for a conceptual site plan showing how they might be applied). Park operations are based at the public works building and include offices, storage, garages, and a meeting room. Additional operational space needs would depend upon the alternative selected for implementation.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

All resource management decisions are based on full consideration of the best available natural and cultural resource information, and are made by professional staff supplied with requisite technical and research support.

- Natural and cultural resources are inventoried and monitored.

- The U.S. Navy collection (documents, photographs, objects, and electronic and magnetic media) at the former navy base is preserved for current and future use by researchers and the public.

- Using the NPS Visitor Experience and Resource Protection methodology, baseline data is obtained to identify indicators, develop standards, and determine acceptable levels of impacts from visitation that can be monitored over time.

- The Rockefeller Building, powerhouse, and proposed Schoodic Peninsula Historic District are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and historic structure and cultural landscape reports are completed to determine treatments for historic resources.

- Determine the extent to which tidal flows may be resticted on the inland side of the Schoodic Loop Road, particularly at the Big Moose Island causeways, and quantify any resulting ecological changes. If warranted, restore natural hydrologic regimes to mitigate impacts based on the results of the investigation.

- Evaluate the potential for restoring the ranger station to a condition that would qualify it as a contributing resource to the proposed Schoodic Peninsula Historic District (NPS 2001b). Complete necessary treatment according to *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

- Archeological and ethnographic resources are inventoried and documentation is available before ground-disturbing activities are proposed.

Management zoning guides use of the Schoodic District, and is used along with design guidelines and carrying capacity guidelines to shape management actions.

- Critical habitats are identified and located in proper management zones, and visitor use is managed to protect resources (e.g., rare plants, Jack Pine Woodland, eagle and seabird nesting sites, wildlife corridors, islands, intertidal zone).

- Designate Research Natural Areas consistent with NPS guidelines to preserve largely undisturbed ecological community types for non-manipulative research and educational use. Research Natural Areas will serve as benchmarks for assessing long-term ecological changes in other locations. Research Natural Areas will be managed to prevent any activity that could alter existing natural conditions and processes. Management actions may include limiting access to all uses other than non-manipulative research. Areas within the Protected Natural Area Subzone (see Figure 8), particularly the Maritime Shrubland Community on Little Moose Island and the intertidal zone, will be evaluated for Research Natural Area designation.

- Carrying capacity indicators and standards are established for zones and monitored over time to protect resources and the visitor experience.

- Adopt design guidelines to ensure design consistency and quality so that SERC will have a unique identity compatible with Acadia National Park.

Schoodic District's natural lightscape is preserved.

- Preserve, to the greatest extent possible, the night sky of the Schoodic District by restricting the use of artificial lighting to those areas where security, human safety, and other site management requirements must be met.

- Utilize minimal impact lighting techniques, and shield the use of artificial lighting where necessary to prevent the disruption of the night sky. Remove or retrofit inappropriate outdoor lighting to preserve the night sky.

Schoodic District's natural soundscape is preserved.

- Maintain Schoodic's quiet character and natural soundscape with minimal disruption from human activities.
- Preserve, to the greatest extent possible, the natural soundscapes of the Schoodic District. The natural soundscape is the aggregate of all the natural sounds that occur in parks in the absence of human-caused sound.
- Prevent or minimize all noise that, through frequency, magnitude, or duration, adversely affects the natural soundscape or other park resources or values, or that exceeds levels that have been identified as being acceptable to, or appropriate for, visitor uses at the Schoodic District.

Vegetation is restored to a natural condition in areas that have been or may be altered by human activity.

- Revegetate areas that have been or may be disturbed by human activity, including areas where buildings and other facilities may be removed and not replaced by other development. Use seeds, cuttings, or transplants representing plant species and gene pools native to the Schoodic District, as feasible.
- Where necessary to preserve and protect the desired condition of specific cultural resources and landscapes, plants generally will be managed to reflect the character of the landscape that prevailed during the historic period. Efforts should be made to extend the lives of specimen trees dating from the historic period being commemorated.
- Selective vegetation will be periodically removed from around buildings to maintain defensible space that will protect buildings in the event of a wildfire.
- Remove perimeter chainlink fence and revegetate disturbed area.

Land use on the Schoodic Peninsula and surrounding islands is compatible with Acadia National Park values and purposes.

- Monitor land use proposals and changes to surrounding lands, and evaluate their potential impacts.
- Participate in the land use planning and regulatory processes of neighboring jurisdictions to encourage compatible adjacent land uses and avoid or mitigate adverse impacts to park resources and values.
- Work cooperatively with surrounding landowners, local and state governments, land trusts, and others so that the use of non-park lands on the Schoodic Peninsula is compatible with park resources and values. The NPS will consider all available land protection techniques and options.
- Cooperate with landowners and land trusts to protect lands of value to the park, pursuant to the 1986 boundary legislation (P.L. 99-420) and the park's Land Protection Plan.

VISITOR USE AND INTERPRETATION

Visitors understand the significance of the resources in the Schoodic District.

- Provide visitor information and interpretive messages through various media, including Internet websites.

Public facilities are safe and universally accessible.

- Building and facilities open to the public will be evaluated and modified to meet current life safety standards.
- All buildings and facilities will be accessible to, and usable by, persons with disabilities to the greatest extent reasonable, in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and standards.
- Buildings and facilities will be modified to ensure that public programs can be provided in accessible locations.

The impacts of private motor vehicles on park resources and the visitor experience are monitored and minimized.

- The Schoodic Loop Road will be maintained as a one-way scenic drive beginning in Winter Harbor off State Route 186, with a two-way spur to Schoodic Point before rejoining State Route 186 in Gouldsboro.

- Develop alternative transportation system approaches to minimize use of private motor vehicles in the park. Consider the use of shuttle buses and improvements to expand bicycling (See Appendix C for more information on alternative transportation proposals for Schoodic).

- Limit parking to the capacity of existing lots. The current capacity at the former navy base is 350 cars and this would not be exceeded, although lots might be relocated within the site. Parking will be permitted only in designated spaces in established lots, and vehicle size will be restricted in lots where turning space is limited. The cooperation of the state and neighboring towns will be sought in developing parking facilities outside of the park for use in connection with an alternative transportation system.

- Prevent parking along roadsides where resource damage may occur or limited parking is desirable, including roads adjacent to Little Moose Island/East Pond and Pond Island/West Pond.

Visitor use is compatible with the Schoodic District's resources and values.

- Provide opportunities for forms of enjoyment that are uniquely suited and appropriate to the resources of the Schoodic District, and defer to local and state governments, private industry, and non-governmental organizations to meet the public's broader spectrum of recreational needs and demands.

- Visitor use, including recreational activities, will be appropriate to the purpose for which the park was established. Activities should foster an understanding of, and appreciation for, park resources and values, or promote enjoyment through a direct association and interaction with park resources without causing unacceptable impacts to park resources or values.

- The dock at Frazer Point will be available for recreational purposes and NPS administrative use only. No ferry or commercial docking will be allowed.

Manage trails according to guidance provided in the park's Hiking Trails Management Plan (2002).

- Retain the configuration of trails in the Schoodic District and preserve their character-defining features by applying the appropriate historic preservation treatment.

- Revegetate most of the social trails on Little Moose Island. Rehabilitate selected social trails to establish a 0.75-mile loop trial. The trail would be sensitive to the vegetation and preserve the visitor experience.

- Management actions to preserve opportunities for solitude and protect vegetation on Little Moose Island will include, but are not limited to, temporary closures, group size limits, and overall visitation limits, as well as increased education efforts. To the degree possible, access to Little Moose Island will be confined to a single point of crossing to reduce impacts on resources.

- Minimize potential resource impacts to the shoreline accessible from former navy base trails, including but not limited to, temporary closures, group size limits, and overall visitation limits. Visitor education efforts will include providing "Leave No Trace" information at trailheads located on the former navy base.

- Visitor education efforts will include providing "Leave No Trace" information at trailheads located on the former navy base.

- The Sundew Trail will be improved according to NPS trail construction standards and designated for administrative use only. The Sundew Trail will not be promoted or appear on NPS maps.
- Designate the Alder Trail for bicycle use if determined to be feasible and appropriate.

Implement a comprehensive sign program.

- In cooperation with neighboring towns and the Maine Department of Transportation, implement a comprehensive sign plan for the Schoodic District consistent with NPS design criteria and standards under the UniGuide Program (2002). The plan will minimize the number of signs inside and outside the park while increasing their effectiveness. Signs within the Schoodic Education and Research Center (SERC) will be distinctively designed to reflect the character and functions of the site, while maintaining compatibility with NPS standards (see design guidelines in Appendix E).

- Signs will be held to the minimum number, size, and wording required to serve their intended functions, so as to minimally intrude upon the natural and historic settings. They will be placed where they do not interfere with park visitors' enjoyment and appreciation of park resources.

- Traffic signs along the Schoodic Loop Road and within the SERC campus will be reduced to the minimum necessary to meet information, warning, and regulatory needs, and to avoid confusion and visual intrusion.

COOPERATIVE EFFORTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Acadia National Park and neighboring towns assist each other in emergencies.

- Mutual aid agreements for medical emergencies and fire protection are maintained with neighboring towns.

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

All park functions, infrastructure, and programs are programmatically and physically sustainable, with principles of conservation applied.

- Facilities are audited for energy efficiency and modified to maximize energy efficiency.

- Proposed program costs are evaluated and business plans prepared to show how funding will be obtained.

Visitors to the Schoodic District possess the appropriate park entrance pass and understand how NPS uses park entrance fees.

- Inform visitors of park entrance fees and how the NPS uses fees to protect resources and improve visitor facilities.

- Issue park entrance passes at the Schoodic District and publicize their availability.

- Implement, as may be needed, specific park entrance fee policies and procedures for the Schoodic Education and Research Center.

Operational budget increases provide for increased responsibilities.

- Budget increases will be sought to meet the park's responsibilities for administration, resource management, interpretation, maintenance, and protection.

ALTERNATIVE A: NO ACTION

OVERVIEW

The National Environmental Policy Act requires that NPS identify and evaluate alternative approaches to meeting its goals. For comparison, the No Action Alternative describes existing conditions at Schoodic and represents what would happen if current operations were continued without major change. Please refer to the map and summary at Figure 9 for an illustration of Alternative A and remember that it also includes actions common to all alternatives such as the application of Management Zoning as illustrated in Figure 8 (further information and cost estimates are found in the Appendices). In general, the Schoodic District would be managed as it has been with some changes related to the departure of the U.S. Navy and as a result of newly obtained resource information.

Although capacity would exist for as many as 200 people for a special event on the campus, this would be extremely unlikely under this alternative due to staffing constraints. A typical day during the peak season would see only park staff on site, with an occasional program for 20 participants. Accommodations would be available for 20 program participants in dormitories, and a small number of apartments would be used for park employee housing. Overnight use would be greatly reduced from the 350–400 people who lived on the base when the U.S. Navy was present.

There would be some 1,526 people per day in the entire Schoodic District during the peak months of July, August, and September. Throughout the year, visitation would average around 738 per day, with an annual projected total of 258,500. It is expected that overall, the Schoodic District of the park would experience a moderate increase in visitor day use (1% per year) in addition to some 1,800 new program participants.

Traffic volumes on park roads have dropped significantly since the departure of the U.S. Navy. In 2000, 60% of the vehicles on Schoodic park roads were non-recreational. While there will always be a certain amount of traffic associated with deliveries and services to the campus, it is expected that the 350 typical non-recreational vehicles per day would be cut in half in the future. Average daily vehicles in 2000 ranged from 802 during the peak summer months to 504 during the rest of the year for an average of 579 vehicles per day and a total of 208,330 vehicles per year. Projected vehicles for this alternative are 154,592 total with average daily totals of approximately 454.

The number of cars seen at one time is an important indicator of visitor satisfaction, according to the *Schoodic Peninsula Visitor Study* (Manning 2002). Interviewed in 2000, visitors were pleasantly surprised to see an average of 2.8 cars at one time on Schoodic Loop Road, although they expected to see an average of 4.1. They reported that they would tolerate a maximum of 12.7 cars at one time, but would prefer to have the road managed to see no more than 8.5 at once. It would appear that the current levels allow ample room for expansion of programs and low-impact recreational uses.

The management prescriptions described in the previous section "common to all alternatives" apply to this alternative, in addition to the management prescriptions and actions listed below.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The historic Rockefeller Building and powerhouse are maintained for future preservation and adaptive reuse.

- The treatment approach for the Rockefeller Building and powerhouse will be "preservation," as provided under *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (1995). This treatment focuses on the protection and stabilization of existing historic materials. Because this alternative would not include removal of pavement nor unneeded buildings, landscape restoration would not occur.

VISITOR USE AND INTERPRETATION

Under this status quo alternative, visitors would continue to enjoy the quiet, uncrowded experience they value today.

- Information and interpretation would be limited to the current system of wayside, road, and trail signs, park fact sheets, and occasional contact with interpretive, protection, and maintenance staff and volunteers. The Frazer Point picnic area and restrooms at Frazer and Schoodic Point would be maintained.

- There would be few programs for the general public, although there might be some limited use of base facilities for educational activities, such as the park's education camp.

- Former navy facilities would be closed to the public for safety reasons and buildings would be secured and closed down. National park personnel would have a somewhat higher presence than they have currently, primarily to respond to emergencies. Contractors or park staff would provide snow plowing and would maintain roads and utility systems.

Circulation on the base would remain dominated by vehicles, with large paved areas and minimal provisions for pedestrians.

- Military structures would predominate, making it difficult to offer a park experience to educational program participants. Access to the shoreline at Big Moose Island would remain limited, as approximately half of it can be reached only from trails originating within the base.

COOPERATIVE EFFORTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Planning for the Schoodic Education and Research Center would continue with efforts made to identify research and education partners.

- Although design studies would continue for buildings targeted for early program and partner use such as the former Commissary, Medical Building, and Rockefeller Building, they would not be available for use.

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

Management would concentrate on maintaining facilities at the lowest possible cost to protect them until an overall direction has been determined and funding is available to reuse or remove buildings.

- Drain pipes and set heating systems at lowest possible temperatures until new uses are known. Buildings and systems would be secured from the weather. Fire detection systems would be deactivated and fire sprinkler systems would be drained.

ALTERNATIVE B: NATIONAL PARK SERVICE MANAGEMENT

OVERVIEW

This alternative represents the approach that would be taken if NPS were to continue to operate its current programs, expanding them somewhat to use the facilities of the navy base. The Schoodic Education and Research Center (SERC) would be the primary use at the former navy base property, but its scope and scale would be more limited. It would focus on research and programs directly related to Acadia National Park and would be managed almost exclusively by NPS. Please refer to the map and summary at Figure 10 for an illustration of Alternative B and remember that it also includes actions common to all alternatives such as the application of Management Zoning as illustrated in Figure 8. (Further information and cost estimates are found in the Appendices).

The approach would be similar to but far more modest than what is described in Alternative C. Priority would be given to existing research and education programs and to preserving historic structures. Programs would be unlikely to fill all buildings available for reuse. Buildings not needed by the park would be secured and mothballed for future use or removed as funding permitted. Over time, almost half the base property could be restored to natural conditions.

The NPS would handle all major management responsibilities, including maintenance, allocating of space, planning, design and construction of any changes to buildings, developing and scheduling programs, and operating services and facilities. While other organizations would participate in research and education at Schoodic, they would not have management responsibilities but would have more limited roles. If partner organizations were to locate at SERC, they would do so through cooperative agreements or leases with NPS.

Although capacity would exist for as many as 400 people for a special event on the campus, a typical day during the peak season would see 150 program participant users on site per day. Accommodations would be available for 90 program participants in dormitories and apartments. Some participants might use the 12 campsites, while others would come from nearby towns and not require onsite lodging. Overnight use would be much reduced from the 350–400 people who lived on the base when the U.S. Navy was present.

Combined with a projected visitor day use of 1,526 people, there would be some 1,656 people per day in the entire Schoodic District during the peak months of July, August, and September. Throughout the year, visitation would average around 868 per day, with an annual projected total of 272,000. It is expected that overall, the Schoodic District of the park would experience a moderate increase in visitor day use (1% per year) in addition to some 13,500 new program participants.

Traffic volumes on park roads have dropped significantly since the departure of the U.S. Navy. In 2000, 60% of the vehicles on Schoodic park roads were non-recreational and most of these were associated with navy use. While there will always be a certain amount of traffic associated with deliveries and services to the campus, it is expected that the 350 typical non-recreational vehicles per day will be cut in half in the future. Average daily vehicles in 2000 ranged from 802 during the peak summer months to 504 during the rest of the year for an average of 579 vehicles per day and a total of 208,330 vehicles per year. Projected vehicles for this alternative are 160,442 total with average daily totals of approximately 519.

The number of cars seen at one time is an important indicator of visitor satisfaction, according to the *Schoodic Peninsula Visitor Study* (Manning 2002). Interviewed in 2000, visitors were pleasantly surprised to see an average of 2.8 cars at one time on the park road, although they expected to see an average of 4.1. They reported that they would tolerate a maximum of 12.7 cars at one time, but would prefer to have the road managed to see no more than 8.5 at once. It would appear that the current levels allow ample room for expansion of programs and low-impact recreational uses.

Management under this alternative would be almost exclusively by NPS, which would rely on available funds to support a full range of responsibilities.

The management prescriptions described in the previous section "common to all alternatives" apply to this alternative, in addition to the management prescriptions and actions listed below.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Disturbed lands are restored after removal of pavement or buildings.

- It is estimated that approximately 40 acres of disturbed landscape could be restored to appropriate native plant communities upon the removal of structures not needed for park use. Many of the buildings on the base would be removed.

The historic Rockefeller Building complex is preserved and the interior rehabilitated for program use.

- The Rockefeller Building which now contains apartments and offices would be adapted to include more offices, a conference room, a small visitor contact and exhibit space, and restrooms. While the exterior of the building would be preserved, the interior would be modified to accommodate programs. Minimal reconfiguring of the interior spaces would be required, as new uses would fit the residential scale of the building without necessitating any major structural changes.

The surrounding landscape is designed and reconfigured to provide a suitable setting for the Rockefeller Building as a primary focal point of the campus.

- Removing asphalt and redesigning the landscape around this building would help provide a setting suitable for a campus within a national park. The landscape around the building was designed in the 1930s in consultation with NPS landscape architects and included native plantings. Grading and planting plans from 1934 are available and should be referenced while creating a contemporary design for the space to address functional needs such as reducing pedestrian and vehicular circulation conflicts. See Figure 12 for illustrations of the future SERC campus.

VISITOR USE AND INTERPRETATION

Circulation system has minimal conflicts and allows visitors access to the former navy base property.

- Existing parking and circulation are evaluated and redesigned to make the base more hospitable to pedestrians in accordance with design guidelines see Appendix E for suggested design guidelines). Parking is consolidated and screened so that pavement may be removed and the landscape restored.

The navy base feels like a campus within a national park setting.

- Removal of pavement and redesigning the landscape will help change the military setting to one more suitable for education and interpretation within a national park. In addition, design standards will be adopted for compatible paving, sidewalks, lighting, benches, signs, and related elements (see Appendix E). Incompatible elements that diminish enjoyment of the night sky and natural soundscape would be mitigated or removed.

New uses support and enhance the quiet, natural visitor experience and the mission of Acadia National Park.

- Criteria would be set and proposed new programs evaluated to ensure consistency with park mission and acceptable levels of use in the various management zones. Activity levels similar to those present in 2000 would be acceptable, as they were compatible with nearby park use as evidenced by visitor surveys and resource studies. New uses might include a wide variety of activities including research, education for students of all ages, artist-in-residence, conferences, retreats, and special events.

Acadia National Park provides facilities and support for a modest amount of day use and residential programs.

- The Rockefeller Building would provide offices for partner program organizations, which would be supplemented by program and meeting space in the chapel, medical clinic, Schooner Club, and commissary. A small exhibit area, visitor contact station, and restrooms would be located in the Rockefeller Building and could include a book sales operation. The galley would provide food service to occupants of the barracks and other housing units.

- Some buildings on the base would be used for park programs or for related operation and maintenance.

- Accommodations would be available for 80 program participants and 10 staff members in dormitories, apartments, and campsites. Dormitories would house younger students while adult students and staff would use apartments.

- Camping facilities would be available for research learning center–related programs and activities and to support park operations. A public campground would not be operated at Schoodic.

Visual intrusions on the Schoodic District's highly valued scenery, including views to and from the peninsula, are minimized.

- New development will not compete with or dominate park features, or interfere with visitor enjoyment of the scenery.
- The installation of towers and other structures taller than tree height will be limited to those that are directly related to the mission and programs of NPS or SERC. The design and siting of towers and other structures will be integrated into the park landscape to minimize visual impacts. The total number of towers and similar structures will be minimized by sharing facilities to the extent possible.
- Towers and similar structures will not be located outside of the Developed Zone of the former navy base.
- Evaluate the option of removing the water tower and replacing it with a ground-level storage tank. Replace the water tower if it is economically, operationally, and environmentally feasible.

COOPERATIVE EFFORTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Park manages programs and facilities.

- Park staff would manage programs and facilities under this alternative, with cooperation from organizations, agencies, and educational institutions.

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

Buildings are evaluated for their reuse potential for Acadia National Park and Schoodic Education and Research Center needs.

- All buildings are assessed for their reuse potential. Operating and maintenance costs are reviewed.

Unneeded buildings are removed to reduce operational costs, improve site conditions, and allow for maximum native plant restoration.

- Buildings would be used for park operations or SERC purposes as shown in the accompanying site plan for Alternative B (Figure 10).
- Buildings and structures ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places would be evaluated for removal when NPS determines that there is no viable and cost–effective use related to the mission and purpose of Acadia National Park or SERC. The NPS would remove buildings when the necessary approvals and compliance documents were completed, and funding was available.
- Buildings and structures designated for removal would be secured in the interim. Small storage, maintenance, and obsolete utility buildings would be removed to improve the appearance and campus-like character of the former navy base property, and to allow for a more efficient use of space. In addition to the minor buildings identified for immediate removal under this alternative, the park would remove structures not needed by SERC such as the hockey rink and mobile home pads, to allow for native plant restoration or the relocation of existing parking spaces.

New programs demonstrate financial viability.

- All proposed SERC programs would be expected to show how operating costs would be generated from user fees, donations, and appropriated and other funds. A full range of revenue-generating options would be explored to offset program costs. Options to be examined might include sales items, program fees, and contributions by sponsoring organizations. Non-NPS programs will be expected to pay rent for office and program spaces and contribute to the use of shared SERC facilities, such as conference rooms.

ALTERNATIVE C: COLLABORATIVE MANAGEMENT (PREFERRED)

OVERVIEW

Under this alternative, the Schoodic Education and Research Center (SERC) would facilitate education and research to promote the understanding, protection, and conservation of natural and cultural resources of the National Park System and related research at the regional, national, and international levels. Please refer to the map and summary at Figure 11 for an illustration of Alternative C and remember that it also includes actions common to all alternatives such as the application of Management Zoning as illustrated in Figure 8 (further information and cost estimates are found in the Appendices).

A separate nonprofit organization would develop and manage the research learning center in cooperation with NPS. The nonprofit would serve as an umbrella organization to coordinate the use of the facilities by partners participating in educational and research activities. It would have sufficient autonomy to be creative and flexible in developing and managing SERC while fully protecting the interests of NPS.

Schoodic Education and Research Center would play a major role in coordinating the activities described in this alternative. Preliminary queries suggest that there are many groups interested in basing research and education activities at Schoodic. A mix of activities could enliven the former navy base and expand educational opportunities. Programs could be offered for people of all ages in the fields of natural and cultural history, conservation, science, music, and art. Facilities would exist for small conferences, retreats, and special events. By pooling the financial capabilities of partners, existing buildings would be reused more quickly than in the other alternatives.

Once criteria and standards are set, proposals would be requested from partners seeking to join SERC as founding partners. The nonprofit would coordinate programs, select new partners, and manage shared services such as food, lodging, and meeting space for program participants.

The NPS role would be to plan and manage the Schoodic District to ensure that resources are protected and to offer educational and interpretive programs along with those sponsored by other SERC partners. The actions described earlier in the section "Management Prescriptions Common to All Alternatives" would guide management, along with those listed below. The park would continue to sponsor research and could develop laboratory, library, computing, and other facilities in collaboration with partners as part of SERC (see Appendix G).

A typical day during the peak season would see no more than 350 program participant users on site per day. Accommodations would be available for 190 program participants and staff in dormitories and apartments. Some participants might use the 12 campsites, while others would come from nearby towns and not require onsite lodging. Overnight use would be much reduced from the 350–400 people who lived on the base when the U.S. Navy was present.

Combined with a projected visitor day use of 1,526 people, there would be some 1,858 people per day in the entire Schoodic District during the peak months of July, August, and September. Throughout the year, visitation would average around 1,068 per day, with an annual projected total of 290,000. It is expected that overall, the Schoodic District of the park would experience a moderate increase in visitor day use (1% per year) in addition to some 31,500 new program participants.

Traffic volumes on park roads have dropped significantly since the departure of the U.S. Navy. In 2000, 60% of the vehicles on Schoodic park roads were non-recreational. While there will always be a certain amount of traffic associated with deliveries and services to the campus, it is expected that the 350 typical non-recreational vehicles per day will be cut in half in the future. Average daily vehicles in 2000 ranged from 802 during the peak summer months to 504 during the rest of the year for an average of 579 vehicles per day and a total of 208,330

vehicles per year. Projected vehicles for this alternative are 169,442 total with average daily totals of approximately 619.

This concept is the one that best meets the goals set out earlier in this plan. It is termed "preferred" because it is the alternative toward which NPS is leaning, pending public and agency review of this draft plan and the accompanying environmental impact statement.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The exterior of the historic Rockefeller Building complex is preserved and the interior rehabilitated for program use.

- The Rockefeller Building which now contains apartments and offices would be adapted to include more offices, a conference room, a small visitor contact and exhibit space, and restrooms. While the exterior of the building would be preserved, the interior would be modified to accommodate programs.

- Minimal reconfiguring of the interior spaces would be required, as new uses would fit the residential scale of the building without necessitating any major structural changes.

The surrounding landscape is designed and reconfigured to provide a suitable setting for the Rockefeller Building as a primary focal point of the campus.

- Removing asphalt and redesigning the landscape around this building would help provide a setting suitable for a campus within a national park. The landscape around the building was designed in the 1930s in consultation with NPS landscape architects and included native plantings. Grading and planting plans from 1934 are available and should be referenced while creating a contemporary design for the space to address functional needs such as reducing pedestrian and vehicular circulation conflicts.

Disturbed lands are revegetated after removal of roads or buildings.

- It is estimated that approximately 16 acres of disturbed landscape could be revegetated with appropriate native plant communities upon the removal of structures not needed for park use. This could take time to achieve, as the decision to remove a building, which may still have a useful life, is not one to be made hastily.

VISITOR USE AND INTERPRETATION

Circulation system has minimal conflicts and allows visitors access to the former navy base property.

- Existing parking and circulation are evaluated and redesigned to make the base more hospitable to pedestrians in accordance with design guidelines (see Appendix E for suggested design guidelines). Parking is consolidated and screened so that pavement may be removed and landscape restored.

The navy base feels like a campus in a national park setting.

- Removal of pavement and redesigning the landscape will help change the military setting to one more suitable for education and interpretation within a national park. In addition, design standards will be adopted for compatible paving, sidewalks, lighting, benches, signs, and related elements. Incompatible elements that diminish enjoyment of the night sky and natural soundscape would be mitigated or removed.

New uses support and enhance the quiet, natural visitor experience and the mission of Acadia National Park.

- Criteria would be set and proposed new programs evaluated to ensure consistency with park mission and acceptable levels of use in the various management zones. Activity levels similar to those present in 2000 would be acceptable, as they were compatible with nearby park use as evidenced by visitor surveys and resource studies. New uses might include a wide variety of activities including research, education for students of all ages, artist-in-residence, conferences, retreats, and special events.

Acadia National Park and its partners provide facilities and support for day use and residential programs.

- Most buildings on the base would be used for park or partner programs or for related operation and maintenance.

- The commissary would be converted to large, flexible meeting space for up to approximately 125 people with state-of-the-art telecommunications and multiple computer stations. The medical clinic would be converted to laboratory and office space for researchers. The barracks and galley would be renovated to serve as the primary short-term residential facility and cafeteria by making improvements to meet fire protection codes and accessibility requirements for people with disabilities.

- The Rockefeller Building, Schooner Club, and chapel would be rehabilitated to meet accessibility requirements, abate asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint, and upgrade/reconfigure building interiors for improved safety and efficiency. The interior of the historic Rockefeller Building would be modified for use as the primary visitor contact station for the Schoodic District. The first floor would be used for visitor information and orientation, SERC program registration, and interpretive exhibits. Other apartments in the Rockefeller Building would be converted to office space for the park and SERC partners. The Schooner Club would be rehabilitated to function as a dining and meeting facility and for other purposes.

- Fire protection deficiencies would be corrected in buildings at SERC. Improvements would consist of installing and upgrading fire suppression and detection systems; installing fire pumps to increase the pressure of water supplies for sprinkler systems; and improving the reliability of power and communications systems.

- Accommodations would be available for up to 170 program participants and 20 staff members in dormitories, apartments, and campsites. Dormitories would house younger students while adult students and staff would use townhouse apartments.

- Camping facilities would be available for research learning center–related programs and activities and to support park operations. A public campground would not be operated at Schoodic.

Visual intrusions on the Schoodic District's highly valued scenery, including views to and from the peninsula, are minimized.

- New development will not compete with or dominate park features, or interfere with visitor enjoyment of the scenery.

- The installation of towers and other structures taller than tree height will be limited to those that are directly related to the mission and programs of NPS or Schoodic Education and Research Center. The design and siting of towers and other structures will be integrated into the park landscape to minimize visual impacts. The total number of towers and similar structures will be minimized by sharing facilities to the extent possible.

- Towers and similar structures will not be located outside of the Developed Zone of the former navy base.

- Evaluate the option of removing the water tower and replacing it with a ground-level storage tank. Replace the water tower if it is economically, operationally, and environmentally feasible.

COOPERATIVE EFFORTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Nonprofit organization manages programs and facilities.

- A nonprofit, with appropriate mandates from NPS, would assist in carrying out the mission of SERC by promoting research and education, cultivating and facilitating partnerships, and managing certain facilities at Schoodic.

- The nonprofit organization would assist in site management by coordinating schedules for shared facilities, such as meeting rooms and lodging. The nonprofit would also manage services such as food and hospitality, using generated revenues to offset program and site operational costs.

- Responsibilities of partners would be identified in short and long-term agreements, which would ensure adherence to NPS standards and criteria.

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

Unneeded buildings are removed to reduce operational costs, improve site conditions, and allow for maximum native plant restoration.

- Buildings would be used for park operations or SERC purposes as shown in the accompanying site plan for Alternative C.

- NPS would lease or assign SERC buildings, and other facilities as may be appropriate, to a nonprofit for management and operation.

- Non-historic buildings and structures would be evaluated for removal when NPS determines that there is no viable and cost effective use related to the mission and purpose of Acadia National Park or SERC. The NPS will remove buildings when the necessary approvals and compliance documents are completed, and funding is available.

- Buildings and structures designated for removal will be secured in the interim. Small storage, maintenance, and obsolete utility buildings would be removed to improve the appearance and campus-like character of the former navy base property, and to allow for a more efficient use of space. In addition to the minor buildings identified for immediate removal under this alternative, the park would remove structures not needed by SERC, such as the hockey rink and mobile home pads, to allow for native plant revegetation or the relocation of existing parking spaces.

New programs demonstrate financial viability.

- All proposed SERC programs would be expected to show how operating costs would be generated from user fees, donations, and appropriated and other funds. A full range of revenue-generating options would be explored to offset program costs. Options to be examined might include sales items, program fees, and contributions by sponsoring organizations. Non-NPS programs will be expected to pay rent for office and program spaces and contribute to the use of shared SERC facilities, such as conference rooms.

ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE AND COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 101 AND 102(1) OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

In its regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality indicates agencies must evaluate alternatives and evaluate each for the degree to which they meet certain policy statements, namely sections 101 and 102(1) of the Act (40 CFR 1502.2d). The NPS NEPA regulations indicate this requirement is met by disclosing how each alternative meets the criteria of section 101(b) of NEPA, and noting any inconsistencies with other environmental laws or policies. Because the six criteria in Section 101(b) of NEPA are also used to determine the environmentally preferred alternative, the following narrative both summarizes how alternatives meet sections 101 and 102(1) of NEPA and provides support for the selection of Alternatives B or C as environmentally preferred. None of the alternatives would conflict with any other environmental law or policy.

The environmentally preferred alternative is defined as the alternative(s) that best meets the criteria or objectives set out in Section 101 of the National Environmental Policy Act. In the appendix to its regulations (Appendix B: Forty Most Asked Questions Concerning CEQ's National Environmental Policy Act Regulations), the Council on Environmental Quality interprets these criteria as meaning "...causes least damage to the biological and physical environment and best protects, preserves and enhances historic, cultural and natural resources."

The mission statement for Acadia National Park summarizes the National Park Service's commitment to the protection and conservation of scenic, natural, and cultural resources for present and future generations, as well as its commitment to advancing nonconsumptive recreation, education, and scientific research opportunities (see Part One: Purpose and Need for further detail). In addition, it is the stated intent of NPS to uphold the goals of the 1992 *General Management Plan* to the greatest extent in the preparation of this draft plan. Goals for the Schoodic District in that plan include retaining opportunities for low-density recreation, and preserving its existing naturalness and solitude. While high–density recreation will be supported on the east side of Mount Desert Island (to the west of the study area), the intent is to retain the present character in other areas of the park, including the Schoodic Peninsula, where no new high-density recreation would be developed (NPS 1992).

Using both the CEQ's interpretations of the Section 101 criteria and the alternatives impact information provided in this document, the three alternatives analyzed in this EIS were evaluated as to their consistency with the criteria set forth in Section 101. The assessment is based on comparison of the three alternatives to determine how well each met or furthered Section 101 objectives. A ranking system of 0–4 (0 = no contribution to the objective; 4 = major contribution to the objective) was used to compare the alternatives. Topics/issues used to evaluate consistency with Section 101 were addressed under only one objective to avoid redundancy, despite the fact that some may have potentially been appropriately reviewed under several topics. Attempts were made to analyze each topic under that objective which it most influenced.

All alternatives propose, among other things, the following major actions:

- The identification of **acceptable levels of visitation** over time could result in some visitor restrictions.
- The implementation of **management zoning** to provide for resource protection and preservation.
- **Inventory/monitoring of natural and cultural resources** to benefit all resources.
- Acquisition of a **conservation easement** to the north of the existing Schoodic parklands, to benefit natural resource conservation, particularly wildlife and vegetation.
- Preparation of the **NRHP nomination form** for the proposed Schoodic Peninsula Historic District, likely to benefit the region in minor to moderate ways.

- Implementation of **transit options** (buses, shuttles) and study of bicycle connections to benefit natural resources and cultural resources.

- Use of **Secretary of the Interior's Standards** for maintenance, preservation and rehabilitation activities to benefit cultural resources.

- **Universal accessibility** would be provided to all structures proposed for visitor use, a benefit to the visitor experience.

- **Use/storage of hazardous materials** would be reduced on former base.

- **Revegetation of social trails** on Little Moose Island.

- **Maintenance of mutual aid agreements** with local communities for medical emergencies and fire protection.

- Preservation and maintenance of Schoodic's **night sky** and **natural soundscape.**

As each of these actions, regardless of alternative, would result in identical contributions to the accomplishment of Section 101 objectives, they are not used in the ultimate evaluation of the environmentally preferred alternative.

SECTION 101 CRITERIA/OBJECTIVES

The following summarizes the evaluation of how effectively the alternatives meet the six objectives of Section 101. As stated in Section 101(b) of the National Environmental Policy Act, federal agencies are required to, to the greatest practicable means:

1. Fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations.

The Schoodic District contains unique and varied natural resources which remain relatively unimpacted when compared to other parts of Acadia National Park. The area contains two state-designated "Rare or Exemplary Natural Communities" (Jack Pine Woodland and Maritime Shrubland) and one designation of "Significant Wildlife Habitat" (migratory shorebird staging area, seabird nesting, tidal waterfowl and wading bird areas, and bald-eagle nesting sites).

Issues relevant to this objective include wastewater discharged to Arey Cove, drinking water demand, soil erosion, reduction of vehicular traffic and effects on vegetation, wildlife and coastal resources. The No Action Alternative would result in somewhat greater benefits for water resources (less wastewater discharge and potential to degrade surface water quality), air quality (fewer emissions), wildlife (less general use/habitat impact), and coastal resources (less use of sensitive intertidal areas) than would implementation of the other two proposals. These benefits are primarily realized through the minor increase in numbers of visitors and vehicles to the Schoodic District, including the base, when compared to Alternatives B and C.

2. Assure for all Americans, safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings.

Each alternative has been designed to provide safe and healthful surroundings for visitors and staff. Most of the issues that address this objective fall under actions common to all alternatives resulting in identical contributions toward the objective. However, aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings are provided to varying degrees under the three alternatives. Issues involved in the assessment of how adequately this objective is met under the three proposals are visitor experience, perceptions of crowding and quiet enjoyment, visual quality, night sky, and the natural soundscape. As actions related to the latter two issues are common to all alternatives, they are not discussed again here.

From a recent visitor study (Manning et al. 2002), it was determined that visitors to the Schoodic District benefit from a variety of experiences, with the most highly rated activity being the enjoyment of the natural scenic beauty. Positive qualities cited by visitors were the pristine natural beauty and scenery,

the quiet atmosphere, and the low level of visitation. Visitors using the Schoodic District expect it to be more peaceful, and less crowded than the Mount Desert Island portion of the park. While most visitors do not believe improvements are necessary at this time, a few mentioned litter, trail erosion, crowding, and traffic as problems. The study also showed that while visitors may prefer a smaller number of vehicles and visitors in the park, they believed higher numbers should be allowed by NPS (please refer to Part Three: Visitor Experience for more details).

Visitor impacts perceived as being caused by increased traffic and visitors would be minimized under the No Action Alternative when compared to increased numbers proposed under Alternatives B and C. As a result, the No Action Alternative is more beneficial regarding perceptions of crowding and quiet enjoyment of the park area than the other two proposals. While the No Action Alternative would result in a much smaller human presence and a quieter, more peaceful visitor experience, it should be reiterated that many believe additional users as proposed under Alternatives B and C are acceptable.

Visual impacts on the Schoodic cultural landscape toward and from the former base are improved under Alternatives B and C when compared to No Action in their potential to provide esthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings (e.g., structure removal, vegetation restoration, use of design guidelines). Major benefits are realized under Alternatives B and C through the creation of a more campus-like and natural feel to the base area, as well as improved base parking and circulation designed to be more pedestrian-friendly. No such benefits are realized under No Action, which proposes negligible use of the base and a situation where many sound buildings would begin to deteriorate due to minimal maintenance.

Each of the three alternatives would contribute to a similar degree to consistency with this objective. The No Action Alternative contributes primarily through its effect on perceptions of crowding (lack of) and quiet enjoyment of the park. The other two alternatives contribute primarily through improvements made to the base and its effects on the cultural landscape and visitor use.

3. Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk to health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences.

Only those uses that would not result in environmental degradation or undesirable consequences are included in the evaluation of how the alternatives fulfill this objective. Relevant topics include actions proposed under all alternatives (see above), including transit options, a conservation easement, inventory/monitoring of natural and cultural resources, management zoning, acceptable visitor levels, and social trail revegetation. As the proposed actions are common to all alternatives, no variation exists among them regarding their potential to contribute positively to the objective.

4. Preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage; and maintain, wherever possible, an environment which supports diversity, and variety of individual choice.

Issues relevant to the accomplishment of this objective include cultural resources, visitor educational materials, the development of educational opportunities (SERC), and reuse of base structures.

The Schoodic District contains a remarkable number of cultural resources, most of which retain a significant degree of integrity. In particular, much of the peninsula encompasses a cultural landscape proposed for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places as a district. The preservation of the cultural landscape is of great interest to park staff and visitors. Levels of impact to this resource vary among alternatives, with the least impact anticipated under the No Action Alternative. Minor to moderate impacts to the cultural landscape of the Schoodic Peninsula, particularly to the Schoodic Loop Road, are expected under both Alternatives B and C. Higher levels of adverse effects are antici-

pated under Alternative C due to the higher numbers of visitors expected. However, under both Alternatives B and C, measures which have the potential to mitigate impacts are also proposed (limiting parking, transit options, etc.), though they would still result in greater impacts than would the No Action Alternative.

The rehabilitation and reuse of the Rockefeller Building and powerhouse would be beneficial under Alternatives B and C, allowing for numerous visitors to experience the NRHP-eligible structure. Maintenance and preservation of the structure is proposed under the No Action Alternative; however, very few visitors would have the opportunity to enjoy the structure under this proposal. The use of the base as the focus for educational offerings (SERC) will contribute to the preservation of the area's historic context, as well as providing diversity and variety of individual choice for visitor activities. The greatest benefits are provided under Alternative C which proposes the largest visitor presence on base, the greatest variety of educational opportunities, and greatest reuse of base structures. Alternative B provides similar benefits to a lesser degree (smaller number of visitors, fewer educational offerings, and reuse of fewer base buildings). The No Action alternative provides negligible benefits in this regard due to its nominal educational offerings and minimal base use. The increase in visitor educational and interpretive information proposed under Alternatives B and C would result in benefits to cultural and natural resources by providing information regarding conservation, preservation, and historic context. Very little new visitor information would be provided under the No Action Alternative.

Alternatives B and C offer notable benefits toward the accomplishment of this objective, with Alternative C providing slightly higher benefits. These result primarily from enhanced educational offerings (SERC), increased visitor information, and the rehabilitation and reuse of the Rockefeller Building and other base structures. The No Action Alternative offers fewer benefits related to this objective; however, it provides the most significant benefit to the preservation of the Schoodic Peninsula cultural landscape.

5. Achieve a balance between population and resource use which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities.

This objective refers to a balance between resource use and preservation. Socioeconomic and recreational topics are considered relevant to the accomplishment of this objective. Recreational topics include hiking, scenic driving, and quiet enjoyment of the park area. As the latter two have been previously addressed under another objective, only hiking is evaluated here.

The socioeconomic climate anticipated varies under the three proposals. Unrelated to the effects of the *Draft General Management Plan Amendment*, the socioeconomic state of Hancock County was significantly impacted with the departure of the Navy in 2001. Prior to this closure, the County's economy was focused on the service and self-employed sectors. Today, the economy of Winter Harbor–Gouldsboro is focused on fishing and logging, as well as the resort economy, seasonal homeowners, and retirees. The navy base closure resulted in significant adverse impacts to spending, jobs, personal income, community infrastructure, housing, schools, and the social fabric of the region.

All alternatives anticipate small visitor increases to the study area unrelated to the proposed use of the base for education and research (SERC). These increases would result in negligible to minor benefits to the local economy. However, the proposed educational programming varies among the three alternatives, resulting in significant differences in the potential to influence the socioeconomic state of the area.

Under the No Action Alternative, very few program opportunities/participants and staff are anticipated to participate in educational offerings at the base. With fewer visitors/staff expected on Schoodic parklands, the local economy will continue to experience the significant adverse impacts created as a result of the base closure in 2001. Alternative C proposes the highest number of SERC program participants and staff, which is expected to result in minor socioeconomic benefits to the area. While Alternative B, a

mid-range proposal with fewer program participants and staff than Alternative C, would result in adverse impacts, it would go further in reversing socioeconomic losses experienced with the base's closure than would the No Action Alternative.

The implementation of a comprehensive trail system proposed under Alternatives B and C would provide a balance between users and resources in its ability to direct visitors away from sensitive cultural and natural resources areas and to discourage off-trail use, regardless of the increase in visitors to the area. These benefits are not realized under the No Action Alternative. In addition, with the base remaining closed to the majority of visitors under the No Action Alternative, access to trails linking the shoreline of Big Moose Island with the base would be limited. Alternative C is believed to best accomplish this objective, primarily due to its combined beneficial effects on the local socioeconomic climate and the implementation of a comprehensive trail system. Alternative B offers similar benefits, only slightly lower due to the decreased socioeconomic effect of fewer program participants. The No Action Alternative is anticipated to have very little effect on the socioeconomic climate of the area. In addition, its less comprehensive approach to the Schoodic hiking trails jeopardizes resources which exist along these facilities to a greater degree than do the other two proposals.

6. Enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources.

The proposed energy audits of base structures, conversion of electric heat to more sustainable fuel sources, ground water recharge, and use of design criteria/guidelines are relevant issues for the fulfillment of this objective. Reduction in vehicular use/emissions, related to the energy conservation focus of this objective, has been previously addressed in its relationship to air quality (Objective 1) and is not further discussed here.

Alternatives B and C propose the use of numerous base structures, with the highest use proposed under Alternative C. All such facilities would undergo energy audits and be modified to maximize energy efficiency according to Design Guidelines for Schoodic Education Research Center (see Appendix E). Under both alternatives, buildings reused would be those that are deemed operationally efficient and environmentally and economically sustainable. Where possible, electric heat will be converted to a more sustainable energy source. In contrast, the No Action Alternative proposes little use of the base facilities and, therefore, would not contribute in a similar way to the fulfillment of this objective. Although the No Action Alternative would result in most of the buildings being boarded up and not used, which would result in a reduction in the amount of heating fuel used on base, these sound structures would not be used, resulting in negligible benefits to this objective.

Ground water recharge will be improved as a result of asphalt and structure removal under both Alternatives B and C, with Alternative B providing a greater contribution (larger area of impermeable surface removal). The No Action Alternative proposes no impermeable surface removal and, therefore, does not contribute in a similar manner to the objective. Due to the proposed reuse of the highest number of base structures, which could result in the greatest use of operationally efficient and environmentally and economically sustainable structures, Alternative C is believed to best accomplish this objective. Alternative B offers only slightly fewer benefits. The No Action Alternative does not contribute in the same way to the objective.

SUMMARY CONCLUSION

Information gleaned from a recent visitor study (Manning et al. 2002) was used to help determine which historic, cultural, and natural resources were most important to Schoodic users. NPS management goals for Schoodic of low–density recreation, preservation of naturalness and solitude, and establishment of a research/learning center have already been endorsed by the public, and so are assumed to carry weight in the distinction between alternatives.

The less-intense use of the Schoodic District proposed under the No Action Alternative would somewhat benefit natural resources when compared to the other two proposals, particularly air quality, water resources, coastal resources, and wildlife. The cultural landscape of Schoodic, however, might suffer from lack of maintenance now that the Navy is no longer present to help. The addition of partners in the Collaborative Partnership Alternative would expand capacities for maintenance.

Both Alternatives B and C would have different, but valued positive effects by providing enhanced visitor information, completing a comprehensive hiking trail system, offering a variety of educational and research opportunities on base, and through the rehabilitation and reuse of base structures, including the NRHP-eligible Rockefeller Building. The former base appearance would be positively affected under Alternatives B and C by the creation of a more natural setting, thereby decreasing visual impacts to the peninsula's cultural landscape. The socioeconomic climate of the area, as well as the potential to enhance the use of renewable resources and recycling, would both be improved under Alternatives B and C.

Because Alternative B (National Park Service Management) and Alternative C (Collaborative Management) best protect resources, cause the least damage to physical and natural resources, and appear to be most consistent with visitor and community input received to date, they are identified as the environmentally preferred choices.